



County of San Diego

# GENERAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MANUAL

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# Executive Summary

While it may be easy for government to move from crisis to crisis never thinking about an overall strategy to maintain stability and efficiency under the future challenges of day-to-day governing, the County of San Diego operates quite differently. As a local government, the County exists to serve the residents of the region. As such, the County of San Diego is committed to providing the best possible services to residents, as efficiently and effectively as possible.

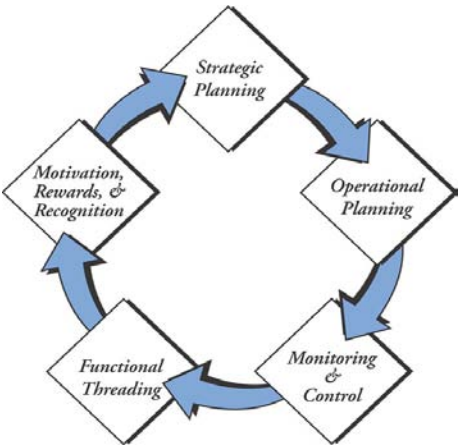
To achieve and maintain this level of operational excellence, we have chosen to implement a comprehensive way of doing business by adopting the General Management System (GMS). This five-part annual cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation ensures that the priorities set by the Board of Supervisors are clear, that goals are achieved, and that San Diego County government is accountable to the public we serve.

Our commitment to operational excellence and accountability is the foundation of the General Management System, and it provides the framework all departments and programs use to carry out our mission with consistency and excellence.

## What Is GMS?

The GMS is a framework that establishes and guides County operations and service delivery to residents, businesses and visitors. Using the GMS, the County sets goals, prioritizes resources, evaluates performance, ensures cooperation and rewards accomplishments in a structured and coordinated way. By doing so, we have moved San Diego County away from the negative image of “red tape” and “government bureaucracy” into an organization that values and implements efficiency, innovation and fiscal discipline and one that provides focused, meaningful services to improve lives and benefit the community.

The five-step system completes a full cycle in a fiscal year. The GMS process begins with creating a long-range, five-year **Strategic Plan**. This is followed by developing a short-term, two-year **Operational Plan**, which encompasses the budget process. **Monitoring and Control** takes place throughout the year using performance measures. **Functional Threading** maximizes efficient use of personnel and material resources by coordinating staff. **Motivation, Rewards and Recognition** encourages continuing excellence by rewarding employees who meet and exceed goals. At the beginning of the next fiscal year, the process begins again with a review of the Strategic Plan and development of a new Operational Plan.



## Why Is the GMS Necessary?

In a word, the GMS is about excellence. The idea behind the GMS is straightforward: the County will be able to provide superior services if we set sound goals and apply strong management principles to achieve those goals.

With an annual budget of approximately \$4 billion and roughly 17,000 employees who serve more than 3 million residents spread across 4,000 square miles, coordination, fiscal and operational discipline, and shared commitment are vital. The GMS enables the County to set County-wide goals and then link the goal-setting to goal-attainment.

A coherent management system helps ensure that all County employees adhere to core principles, promoting a culture that values employees, partners, and customers. The GMS institutionalizes disciplines such as continuous improvement, fiscal integrity, transparency and accountability.

**The idea behind the GMS is straightforward: the County will be able to provide superior services if we set sound goals and apply strong management principles to achieve those goals.**

## What Is the History of the GMS?

On April 21, 1998, the Board of Supervisors accepted the GMS as the formal comprehensive guide for planning, implementing, and monitoring all functions and processes that affect delivery of services to San Diego County residents. The County developed the GMS following the severe fiscal crisis that threatened County programs and solvency in the mid-1990s.

## When Is the GMS Used?

The GMS is much more than a crisis management tool for putting the County's fiscal house in order. It is an ongoing system that ensures sound management becomes a part of our permanent organizational culture. The principles and procedures outlined by the GMS are meant to apply to every County function on a year-round basis.

## Who Is Responsible for the GMS Implementation?

Every County employee should know the GMS and their role in it. To achieve our goals, employees must share a sense of ownership and responsibility. Despite the important role of management, successful GMS application depends on strong and effective leadership at all levels of County service. Every County employee is expected to help set goals, strive to achieve them, monitor performance and reward achievement.



## What Are the GMS Basics?

The GMS is a closed loop of five overlapping elements that form an ongoing cycle. Each element ensures that the County asks and answers crucial questions.

| GMS Element                          | Question Asked                        | Element Description  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Strategic Planning                   | <i>Where do we want to go?</i>        | Our Strategic Plan looks ahead five years to anticipate significant needs, challenges, and risks that are likely to develop. Long-range planning requires assessing both where we are and where we want to be.   |
| Operational Planning                 | <i>How do we get there from here?</i> | Operational Planning allocates resources to specific programs and services that support our long-term goals over the next two fiscal years. This includes adoption of an annual budget and approval in principle of a second year spending plan.   |
| Monitoring and Control               | <i>How is our performance?</i>        | Monitoring and Control shows us whether we are on track to achieve our goals. We evaluate progress at regular intervals and make necessary adjustments. Progress is evaluated monthly, quarterly, and annually.  |
| Functional Threading                 | <i>Are we working together?</i>       | Although the County is divided into distinct groups, departments and divisions for operational purposes, the County has many critical functions and goals that cross these organizational lines. Functional threading ensures coordination throughout the organization to pursue shared goals, solve problems, and exchange information. |
| Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition | <i>Are we encouraging excellence?</i> | County employees must embrace the GMS and understand how the process applies to their individual job. This requires setting clear expectations, providing incentives, evaluating performance, and rewarding those who meet or exceed expectations. Motivation, Rewards and Recognition encourages individual and group excellence.       |

# Strategic Planning

## *Where do we want to go?*

### Overview

Effective planning requires that we know not only what we want to accomplish, but also what resources we have and how best to use them. Successful planning identifies the obstacles we face and determines what change is needed to succeed.

The County's Strategic Plan charts the course for accomplishing our mission of serving the residents of San Diego County over a five-year period. The County's strategic planning process defines major projects and initiatives, and anticipates significant needs, challenges and risks.

The process begins by asking the following questions:

- ▶ Where do we want to go?
- ▶ Where do we want to be in five years?
- ▶ Where are we today?
- ▶ How will we get there?
- ▶ What factors will have an impact on our plans?

Strategic planning is a continuous process. In many ways, this process is as valuable as the plan itself. At the Countywide level, the process is coordinated by a team of representatives of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), group General Managers/Deputy CAOs (DCAOs), Human Resources Director, Office of Financial Planning, Chief Information Officer, and the Director of Media and Public Relations. Because of their key role in the strategic planning process, this team is known as the Strategic Planning Support Team (SPST).

Building on the information shared by a variety of subject area experts, the SPST looks at what the County is doing well, where we can improve, and at any favorable or unfavorable conditions that impact the County. This analysis forms a critical component of assessing our direction in future years and forms the basis of the County's Strategic Plan. SPST proposes revisions to the Strategic Plan if needed, to ensure County goals are relevant and meaningful. These proposed revisions are presented to the General Managers/DCAOs and the CAO for their consideration.

The CAO and General Managers/DCAOs use this information to develop the Five-Year Financial Forecast, a forward-looking projection of all resources required to implement the Strategic Plan. Finally the individual Strategic Plans of groups and departments are aligned with the County's five-year Strategic Plan.

## Strategic Planning Step-by-Step

### Step 1 – Review the County’s Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Plan

The essential first step in planning is to ask the following:

- ▶ What is the County’s purpose?
- ▶ What are the ideals we value and hope to achieve?
- ▶ What principles guide us?

We ask these questions to remind us who we are and where we want to be. The County’s Mission, Vision, Guiding Principles and Strategic Plan provide the context for making planning decisions. Any strategic planning effort must fulfill the County’s Mission, move the County toward realizing its Vision, and uphold our Guiding Principles.

### Step 2 – Perform a Gap Analysis

The SPST conducts an analysis to identify whether there are any gaps between what the County says we’re going to do in our Strategic Plan and what we are actually doing in the Operational Plan. In other words, does our plan match our budget and vice versa? This gap analysis focuses attention on areas that may not be moving forward and helps ensure that resource allocation reflects the County’s strategy.

### Step 3 – Perform/Update Environmental Scan

SPST conducts an Environmental Scan to identify the internal and external factors that affect County activities and change stakeholder expectations. To perform the Environmental Scan, SPST asks the following questions of various subject matter experts:

- ▶ How does the outside environment affect the County’s ability to function?
- ▶ What events beyond County control may affect service demand? Or funding?
- ▶ What are the internal and external risks to the County?
- ▶ What changes are occurring in regional socio-economic trends that may affect the County?

### Step 4 – Perform a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

- ▶ Building on the observations of the Environmental Scan, the SPST conducts a SWOT analysis that looks comprehensively at the County organization to ask the following:
- ▶ What does the County do well? What are our strengths?
- ▶ Which areas can be improved? What are our weaknesses?
- ▶ What is the County’s fiscal situation?
- ▶ What is the status of County employees’ experience and efficiency?
- ▶ How well is the County providing services?
- ▶ What is the County’s unrealized potential? What opportunities exist?
- ▶ What threats face the County?

### Step 5 – Define or Reconsider Strategic Initiatives

Based on the information identified in the Gap Analysis, the Environmental Scan, and the SWOT analysis, the SPST reexamines the Strategic Plan and its Strategic Initiatives and suggests refinements as necessary. The Strategic Initiatives define our priorities and focus our efforts. The Strategic Initiatives are broad organization-wide goals that move the County from abstract ideals and values to more concrete applications.

### Step 6 – Develop the Five-Year Financial Forecast

The final step in strategic planning occurs when the General Managers/DCAOs evaluate the resources needed to achieve County goals, and develop the Five-Year Financial Forecast. The forecast includes a projection of resources required to implement new initiatives, and to continue or adjust existing programs. Key questions in developing the Five-Year Financial Forecast include:

- ▶ What are the trends for revenue, expenditures, and staff years?
- ▶ What has previously affected those trends and what may affect them in the future?
- ▶ What impacts will new initiatives have on existing resources?
- ▶ What resources will be necessary to make continuous improvements in service?
- ▶ What funding sources are expected over the next five years? What new sources are available? What existing sources will decrease or end?



# Operational Planning

## *How do we get there from here?*

### Overview

If Strategic Planning tells us where the County is going, Operational Planning allocates the money and the staff to get there. During the creation of the two-year Operational Plan, which is the County's budget process, resources are allocated to certain projects. As part of operational planning, we ask:

- ▶ What does the County want to accomplish during the next two years?
- ▶ How do our two-year objectives contribute to meeting our five-year strategic goals?
- ▶ How will we fund and staff County programs?

The Operational Planning element of the GMS puts the Strategic Plan into action. You may remember, the final step of the Strategic Planning process is the creation of a Five-Year Financial Forecast. The first two years of the Five-Year Financial Forecast are used to develop the County's Operational Plan or budget. Specifically, Operational Planning focuses on short-term fiscal planning and ultimately results in the official document prepared by the CAO and adopted by the Board of Supervisors as the County's budget.

Because the State Government Code requires the Board of Supervisors to adopt a budget each year, the Board may only formally adopt the first year of the Two-Year Operational Plan. The Board approves the second year in principle for planning purposes.

### Linking the Operational Plan To the Strategic Plan

It is critical that our Operational Plan supports the goals laid out in the Strategic Plan. The Operational Plan creates a direct link between our Strategic Plan goals and specific programs, staffing, and costs.

As such, development of the Operational Plan occurs using the County's Strategic Plan as a guide. County groups and departments prepare budget recommendations, review or develop programs, and determine staffing using the following questions:

- ▶ Does the expenditure bring us closer to our goals?
- ▶ Is the program mandated by state or federal law? Are we meeting these legal, regulatory, or funding requirements?
- ▶ Can we leverage resources through internal or external partnerships, or grant funding?
- ▶ How will resource changes affect other programs?
- ▶ If external funding is eliminated, is a County expenditure still justified?

## The County’s Operational Planning Process

In many ways, preparation for next year’s budget begins as soon as the ink is dry on the current year’s budget. In January or February of each year, the Chief Financial Officer distributes the initial Two-Year Operational Plan instructions to County departments. These instructions provide both general information about the operational planning process and detailed instructions for preparing the numerical and narrative sections of the Proposed Operational Plan.

In late February or early March, department heads develop the Proposed Operational Plan objectives and the Operational Plan itself using the County’s Strategic Plan goals to guide their efforts.

In May, the CAO submits the Proposed Operational Plan to the Board of Supervisors and the public. The Board formally accepts the document for review and holds public hearings in June. In mid-June, the CAO submits proposed changes, if any, to the Board. Additionally, Board members may submit proposed changes. These changes reflect modifications in revenues, expenditures, and priorities that have occurred since the Proposed Operational Plan was submitted. These modifications also take into account recent Board actions and public input from the budget hearings.

In late June at the conclusion of public hearings, the Board deliberates, makes modifications, and approves the Operational Plan. Final Operational Plan adoption occurs in July or August. The lag time between approval in June and adoption in July or August is a required formality and allows the final Operational Plan to incorporate Board-approved modifications made during deliberations.

## Contents of the Operational Plan Document

The Operational Plan document includes the following:

- ▶ General information about the County and the Operational Plan itself
- ▶ Narratives, tables, and charts showing the revenues and expenditures for all County funds
- ▶ A review of planned capital projects
- ▶ A summary of the County's short and long-term financial obligations/debt
- ▶ A breakdown by group and department detailing the following:
  - The group/department mission
  - Prior year accomplishments
  - Operational objectives (derived from the Strategic Plan)
  - Changes to revenue, expenditures or staff levels from the prior year's Operational Plan
  - Revenue amounts and sources
  - Expenditures and staffing by program
  - Performance measures and targets

# Monitoring and Control

## *How is our performance?*

### Overview

The Strategic and Operational Plans set goals for the County and allocate needed resources to achieve those goals. The Monitoring and Control element of the GMS ensures County operations stay on target.

Monitoring and Control challenges all County employees to regularly ask:

- ▶ Are we on track?
- ▶ Are groups and departments meeting their customer service, financial, and performance goals?
- ▶ Are individual managers effectively using resources and exercising needed leadership?
- ▶ Are projects producing desired results on time and within cost constraints?
- ▶ What needs to be done to correct identified deficiencies?

Monitoring and Control is the process of scrutinizing our operations in order to track progress and make necessary adjustments. Many review methods exist for formal evaluations of various functions. These evaluations occur on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis at different levels to monitor and assess projects, managers, departments and groups. The table that follows on the next page details primary County Monitoring and Control tools.

### Performance Measurement

As part of ongoing Monitoring and Control efforts, the County makes regular use of performance measures, key data that help track how the County is doing by comparing the same information over time. Developing and using performance measures allows the County to translate our Strategic Initiatives into coherent and quantifiable results. Performance measures also create a common set of expectations for group, department, project and employee performance, helping everyone on the County team work toward the goals laid out in our Strategic and Operational Plans. Translating organizational objectives into everyday tasks allows each employee to identify his contribution to the achievement of the County's goals.

Quantifying our performance also gives the County the ability to report both internally and to the public about our progress and impact in the community. Performance measures are useful to help identify and make necessary changes when performance doesn't meet expectations, as well as to reward a job well done. Our performance measures tell us whether our efforts produce desired results, alert us to unintended consequences, and guide needed course corrections. In general terms, the County's performance measures track:

- ▶ **Outcomes** – results
- ▶ **Quality** – degree of excellence

As applied to the County, there are generally four perspectives under which measures are categorized:

| Perspective                                       | Description  |
|---|--|
| <b>Customer Perspective</b>                       | Pinpoints our target customers.<br><i>Are we meeting their needs and expectations?</i>   |
| <b>Continuous Improvement Process Perspective</b> | Identifies ways of doing business at which the County must excel in order to accomplish our goals and best meet the needs of citizens.<br><i>Is there a better way?</i>                  |
| <b>Employee Perspective</b>                       | Assesses the employee skill levels and support systems necessary to achieve our goals.<br><i>Are we providing sufficient employee support and opportunities for continuous learning?</i> |
| <b>Financial Perspective</b>                      | Tells us whether our financial performance is meeting our resource objectives.<br><i>Are we delivering maximum cost-efficiency and value to our customers for each dollar spent?</i>     |



## Examples of Monitoring and Control Evaluation Tools

| Tool  | Description   |
|---|---|
| <b>CAO Goals and Accomplishments</b>                                      | An annual written statement of goals and accomplishments submitted by the CAO to the Board of Supervisors.  |
| <b>Quarterly Reviews</b>  | Reports from groups are prepared and presented orally to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) by each group General Manager/DCAO and management staff. Quarterly reviews cover specific management topics, as determined by the CAO, including regular reviews of each group's fiscal and human resources data, program performance issues, customer service feedback and potential risks.          |
| <b>Project Management Reporting Systems</b>                               | Quarterly, specific projects are reviewed by the CAO and General Managers/DCAOs through Contract Business Process Review (CBPR) and Project Management Review (PMR). These formal review panels provide an opportunity to report on a project's cost, schedule status, performance measures, major risks and mitigation plans.  |
| <b>Department Reviews</b>   | Monthly, General Managers/DCAOs look over operational areas with their department heads to review performance measures and identify risks as soon as possible.  |
| <b>CFO and General Manager's Resource Allocation Review</b>               | Every two weeks, the General Managers/DCAOs review and reassess group budget decisions based on current events, available resources, and priorities.  |
| <b>Business Process Reengineering and Continuous Improvement Projects</b> | There are always government services or processes that can be improved. When these areas are identified, executives work with front line employees to create explicit performance targets, set deadlines, and develop strategies for improvement. These projects track our ability to provide new or improved services to citizens using fewer tax dollars.   |
| <b>Risk Overview Committee</b>  | The Risk Overview Committee (ROC) meets quarterly to identify and address significant legal, financial, contractual and operational risks to the County. The ROC serves in an advisory role to the CAO and the Board of Supervisors, and is chaired by the Assistant CAO and County Counsel.  |
| <b>Audit Committee</b>  | The Audit Committee meets quarterly and advises the CAO on matters relating to the County's internal and external audits, including advice on risk assessments, internal controls and governance matters. The Committee is chaired by the Assistant CAO and includes the Chief Financial Officer, the Auditor & Controller, the County's Chief of Audits and three independent members of the public. |

# Functional Threading

## *Are we working together?*

### Overview

Although the County organization is divided into distinct groups, departments, and divisions, many of its critical functions cross organizational lines. Functional Threading is the process of ensuring coordination throughout our organization to pursue goals, solve problems, share information, and leverage resources. Functional Threading is a key element of the GMS, although it is also a way of doing business that stands on its own.

For practical purposes, the County allocates resources by group and department. However, the purpose behind resource allocation is not simply to support these organizational units, but to accomplish our Strategic Initiatives – to support major undertakings that fulfill the County's Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles. Functional Threading helps us work together to better serve the public and to achieve our shared goals.

Functional Threading looks at day-to-day operations and asks:

- ▶ How can we work together to accomplish our goals?
- ▶ What resources and expertise do we have?
- ▶ What County functions do we perform that are similar or related?
- ▶ Are these functions coordinated?
- ▶ Are resources, staff or expenditures duplicated?

### Who Is Responsible for Functional Threading?

It is the ongoing responsibility of department heads and General Managers/DCAOs to ensure that County employees work together to leverage resources and solve problems. Although management-level employees are specifically tasked with regular participation in threading activities, as a practical matter, Functional Threading should not be limited to only these employees.

Project teams tasked specifically with threading activities can involve employees at many levels. Additionally, Functional Threading is performed on a regular basis by nearly everyone in the County organization through routine tasks like making constituent referrals between agencies or information sharing between inspectors.

## Functional Threading in Action

Certain County functions are common to most departments. These include budgeting and finance, customer service, and information technology, to name a few. Day-to-day coordination and cooperation across our organizational lines is necessary to perform these common functions efficiently and consistently. Functional Threading occurs when individuals with similar job responsibilities communicate and collaborate to better perform their jobs and serve the organization and the public. To this end, the County has regular meetings of all human resources staff, financial staff, public information officers, and others throughout the organization. The idea being that these professionals have responsibilities that impact the County as a whole, and should collaborate and share expertise and resources unique to their roles.

In addition to Functional Threading throughout the County by job responsibilities, the County also teams up across department lines when Functional Threading involves meeting Countywide goals. For example, staff from various managerial levels will convene to move forward projects that have an organization-wide impact, or encompass the functions of many departments. Efforts such as emergency preparedness planning affect all County departments. Functional Threading gives us the ability to plan for emergencies in a comprehensive way by using the combined expertise of many people throughout our organization.

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# Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition

## *Are we working together?*

### Overview

Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition is the final piece of the GMS that engages our organization's most valuable resource, the men and women of the County workforce. Motivation, Rewards and Recognition ensures that we reward excellence in employee performance by turning abstract concepts and goals into a clear, relevant, and personal obligation for each employee.

How? By providing all County employees with:

- ▶ Clarity about what is expected on the job
- ▶ Clear understanding of what it takes to do the job well
- ▶ Meaningful incentives for meeting and exceeding expectations, including monetary rewards

**Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition ensures that we reward excellence in employee performance by turning abstract concepts and goals into a clear, relevant, and personal obligation for each employee.**

The strongest goals, budget and oversight are meaningless without the commitment of people performing the work. When all members of the County team achieve excellence, we become an efficient and effective organization that provides superior services to benefit citizens and the community.

How does the County instill the value of the GMS in every employee? Since we can't simply issue a commitment to operational excellence with every County ID, specific tools and programs inform employees about job duties and expectations, evaluate performance and provide incentives for employees who do their jobs well. Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition also promotes employee development, encourages individual excellence and the initiative needed to achieve County goals. Simply stated, every employee has their own job expectations and if you meet or exceed them, you will be rewarded.

## The County's Motivation, Rewards, and Recognition Programs\*

| What/Who  | Description  | Award Type  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Performance-Based Advancement in Salary</b><br><br><i>For classified employees</i>   | Employee performance is reviewed annually using performance appraisals. New classified employees generally move up from step one after six months, with annual advancements following. Confidential and management employees are eligible for advancement to a higher salary within their class range. Employees may not advance if their overall performance was rated below standard.  | Approximately five percent difference between salary steps for classified employees in step classes. Percentage advancement varies at the discretion of the appointing authority for confidential and management employees in broad band classes. |
| <b>Quality First</b><br><br><i>For all permanent employees</i>  | Quality First (QF) rewards contributions to countywide and departmental goals. Most employees have an annual Quality First plan that details specific goals and how to measure their achievement. Department heads submit all Quality First plans to their General Manager/DCAO, who review and approve them. The QF plan is ultimately approved by the CAO. Performance in achieving identified goals determines payouts to employees         | Employees can be awarded as much as four percent of annual salary. These temporary salary increases are paid out over six pay periods.  |
| <b>Operational Incentive Plan (OIP)</b><br><br><i>For executives and unclassified managers</i>  | Operational Incentive Plans (OIPs) are annual employee performance plans that serve as a self-evaluation and accountability tool. The CAO and top County executives set OIP categories that reflect the County's Strategic Initiatives and CAO goals. General Managers/DCAOs and department heads evaluate the OIP results submitted by the managers under their supervision and make recommendations to the Executive Compensation Committee. | Based on the OIP results, individual salaries are adjusted. Pay increases are based on meeting and exceeding goals. Failure to achieve goals may result in a base pay reduction.  |
| <b>Do-It-Better-By-Suggestion (DIBBS) Program</b><br><br><i>For all permanent employees except executives and unclassified managers</i> | The Do-It-Better-By-Suggestion (DIBBS) Program accepts and evaluates employee suggestions for improvements. Employees can submit ideas for improving operations, customer service, cost efficiency or improved safety. The basis for the award is approval and implementation of the employee's suggestion.  | DIBBS awardees attend a Countywide recognition ceremony. DIBBS awardees can receive a one-time cash award up to \$20,000 based in part on the amount of savings the suggestion produces.  |
| <b>CAO Recognition Award</b><br><br><i>For executives and unclassified managers</i>   | These awards are made at the discretion of the CAO for special contributions by managers who are otherwise ineligible for DIBBS.   | A one-time cash award of up to ten percent of salary, not to exceed \$10,000.   |



| What/Who  | Description  | Award Type  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Department Employee Recognition and Award Programs</b><br><br><i>For all employees</i> | At the discretion of their appointing authority, employees can be rewarded for exceptional performance above and beyond expectations. The program's goal is to improve customer service while enhancing motivation and strengthening teamwork. | Commendations, cash, non-monetary awards, and/or recognition leave are given to individuals or groups of employees. There is a maximum \$1,000 total value for each separate award and a \$1,000 limit per fiscal year. |

\* NOTE: In addition to the programs detailed in the above table, additional project and/or department-specific recognition activities are encouraged and take place throughout the year. The County also uses its publications to recognize employee excellence and accomplishments.

## Conclusion

The County of San Diego works to provide the best possible service to residents while serving as responsible stewards of public dollars. How does a local government excel? At the County of San Diego, we've chosen a common sense strategy for making government work. We've built a culture of operational excellence through the adoption of the General Management System (GMS).

The GMS serves as the County's instruction manual for running an effective and accountable government. More than just a playbook, the elements of the GMS encompass an annual cycle that engages all employees on a daily basis.

To briefly review the five elements of the GMS:

- ▶ **Strategic Planning** sets the County's goals.
- ▶ **Operational Planning** allocates resources to achieve our goals.
- ▶ **Monitoring and Control** ensures that County operations remain on track and alerts us to any risks that may arise.
- ▶ **Functional Threading** promotes cooperation and sharing of expertise and resources.
- ▶ **Motivation Rewards and Recognition** engages the County workforce in turning abstract goals into daily success on the job.

At the County of San Diego we pride ourselves on continuous improvement and excellence in our operations. Furthermore, we have been recognized frequently at the local, state and national levels for prudent management and government innovation. Working together, the Board of Supervisors, the CAO and a dedicated team of public employees have created an organization that values efficiency, innovation and fiscal discipline. Our programs provide focused, meaningful services that improve lives and benefit the community. It is the General Management System that makes the County of San Diego a government of excellence.

## Additional Resources

County employees:

- ▶ For additional resources and more information about the GMS including training materials and contact information, visit the County's Intranet at: [cww/gms](#)
- ▶ For additional information about the Operational Plan and budgeting visit the Auditor and Controller's office on the County Intranet at: [cww/ac](#)
- ▶ For information about when specific GMS activities occur throughout the calendar year, check the CAO Master Calendar, which is posted on the County Intranet at: [cww/cao](#)

Members of the public:

- ▶ For more information about the GMS, and a copy of the County's Strategic Plan visit the CAO's office on the Internet at [www.sdcounty.ca.gov/cao](#)
- ▶ For the County's Operational Plan and other financial documents visit the Auditor and Controller's office on the Internet at [www.sdcounty.ca.gov/auditor](#)

# Appendix

## Glossary of GMS Terms and Acronyms

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>ACAO</b>                              | Assistant Chief Administrative Officer.  |
| <b>Appointing Authority</b>              | The elective or appointive officer of a department, office, board or commission of County government who has the power by County Charter or by lawfully delegated authority to make appointments to or remove persons from positions.  |
| <b>Board of Supervisors</b>              | The elected governing and policy body for the County of San Diego. There are five members of the Board of Supervisors.   |
| <b>CAO</b>                               | Chief Administrative Officer. The CAO is the chief executive of the County who is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to carry out all of the Board's policy decisions that impact County operations and to ensure the effective administration of County government.  |
| <b>DCAO</b>                              | Deputy Chief Administrative Officer. See General Manager/DCAO.   |
| <b>Environmental Scan</b>                | A process by which subject matter experts meet with the SPST to share information about the internal and external factors that influence and drive County activities and stakeholder expectations. The Environmental Scan is performed annually as part of the Strategic Planning process  |
| <b>Executive Compensation Committee</b>  | Made up of the ACAO, General Managers/DCAO, CFO, County Counsel, and Human Resources Director. The Executive Compensation Committee makes salary adjustment recommendations to the CAO for the unclassified service.   |
| <b>Final or Adopted Operational Plan</b> | The Operational Plan, as approved by the Board of Supervisors annually in late June and formally adopted in July or August. Also referred to as the County's budget.   |
| <b>Gap Analysis</b>                      | An analysis performed by the SPST as part of the Strategic Planning Process. The Gap Analysis is used to determine whether there are any gaps between what the County says it's going to do in its Strategic Plan and what it is actually doing.   |
| <b>General Manager/DCAO</b>              | General Manager/Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO). The County has General Managers/DCAOs that oversee various business groupings of County departments. These individuals can be referred to using either the title of General Manager or Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO), or both. General Managers/DCAOs are responsible for implementing the Board of Supervisors' and CAO's policies and procedures in each department within their group. |

## Glossary of GMS Terms and Acronyms

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|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>GMS</b>                       | General Management System. The GMS is a framework that guides planning, implementation, monitoring, coordination and evaluation to continuously improve the County's delivery of services to residents, businesses and visitors.  |
| <b>Group</b>                     | An organizational unit of departments within the County headed by a General Manager/DCAO.   |
| <b>Guiding Principles</b>        | Statements of the County's core values. These are the County's ethical obligations to residents.  |
| <b>Mission</b>                   | States the purpose of County government.  |
| <b>Proposed Change Letter</b>    | Modifications to the Proposed Operational Plan submitted by the CAO to the Board of Supervisors annually in mid-June to reflect revenues, expenditures, or priorities that change after the Proposed Operational Plan is introduced in May. Individual Supervisors may also submit Change Letters.  |
| <b>Proposed Operational Plan</b> | The suggested or draft Operational Plan that the CAO submits for review to the Board of Supervisors and the public annually in May.   |
| <b>Required Disciplines</b>      | Statements that identify the County's standards for operational excellence. Required Disciplines are listed in the Strategic Plan.  |
| <b>Resources</b>                 | Items of value that are used to accomplish the County's goals. The items include taxpayer dollars, employees and all San Diego County assets, including natural and cultural resources, individual expertise and creativity, and the informed interest of County residents.   |
| <b>SPST</b>                      | Strategic Planning Support Team. This group is made up of representatives from the following: the CAO, General Managers/DCAOs, Human Resources Director, Chief Information Officer, Director of Media and Public Relations. The SPST plays an integral role in the County's Strategic Planning process and works to support the GMS throughout the County organization. |
| <b>Strategic Indicators</b>      | Statistics that identify big picture issues and trends that may influence or be affected by the County's Strategic Initiatives and Required Disciplines.  |
| <b>Strategic Initiatives</b>     | Statements that identify broad, organization-wide goals that help prioritize specific County efforts and programs. The County's Strategic Initiatives are included in its Strategic Plan.   |
| <b>SWOT</b>                      | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. SWOT is a County-level analysis performed annually as part of the Strategic Planning process.  |



## Glossary of GMS Terms and Acronyms

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Two-Year Operational Plan</b> | The County's financial plan for the next two fiscal years, detailing each department's objectives and the resources required to achieve them. This plan consists of two parts: a budget for the upcoming fiscal year which is formally adopted by the Board of Supervisors, and a proposed budget for the second fiscal year, which is approved in principle by the Board of Supervisors. |
| <b>Vision</b>                    | Statement that refers to an ideal state we strive toward; what the County would like to be.   |